

ART. VII.—*Proceedings of the Asiatic Society.*

Wednesday Evening, 6th March, 1839.

At a Meeting held at the Grand Jury Room of the Supreme Court.

The Honorable Sir E. RYAN, President, in the chair.

The Proceedings of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Honorable Sir H. SETON, the Rev. JOHN HENRY PRATT, Dr. WILLIAM JAMESON, Mr. E. THOMAS, Mr. J. W. LAIDLAY, and Mr. A. C. DUNLOP, proposed at the last Meeting, were balloted for, and duly elected Members of the Society.

Read a letter from Mr. CHARLES RITTER, acknowledging his election as an honorary Member.

The Officiating Secretary apprized the Meeting of the departure of their Curator, Dr. GEORGE EVANS, to Europe; and after some discussion it was resolved that Dr. WILLIAM JAMESON be appointed to the office, on the same allowances as those drawn by his predecessor.

Library.

Read a letter from H. T. PRINSEP, Esq. forwarding for inspection Dr. ROBERT WIGHT'S Illustrations of Indian Botany.

The following books were presented :—

Bulletin de la Societé de Geographie, vol. 9th—*by the Society.*

On the Ovulum of Santalum, by WILLIAM GRIFFITHS, Esq.—*by the Author.*

Die Stupa's (Topes) and die Colosse Von Bamiyan, by CARL RITTER—*by the Author.*

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, No. 9—*by the Society.*

Proceedings of the Bombay Geographical Society for August, 1838—*by the Society.*

Ditto of the American Philosophical Society, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, from January to August

1838—*by the Society.*

5 Copies Alif Leila, vol. 1st in Arabic—*subscribed for by the Society.*

Lardner's Cyclopaedia—Literary and Scientific Men, vol. 9th—*from the Booksellers.*

Read an application from PREMCHAUND Pundit, Editor of the "Nyeshadha," regarding the 2nd part of the work in Manuscript, and offering to making over the same to the Society, on condition of his being remunerated for his trouble in compilation.

Resolved that the application be referred to the Committee of Papers.

Museum.

A Gumsoor Battle Axe was presented by Mr. J. G. BALMAIN.

Statistics.

Read a letter from H. H. SPRY, Esq., Secretary to the Statistical Sub-Committee, intimating that in consequence of the Society's declining to publish the Documents compiled by them, they will no longer prosecute their researches.

The Annual Report for 1838, which had been presented on the 1st of January, was then read, and adopted by the Meeting.

Secretaries' Annual Report.

The indisposition and absence of the Rev. Mr. MALAN since his appointment, and the short period during which we have held the office of Officiating-Secretaries, will we trust constitute a sufficient apology for the incompleteness of the present anniversary notice.

We have endeavoured by a diligent perusal of the proceedings of the year just elapsed to become familiar with the state and prospects of the Society, and we have also

sought more detailed information from the gentlemen severally responsible for the Library, Finance, and Museum departments.

On the general statistics of the Society we have to state that the accession of Members to the Society during the year 1838 was as follows:—

Ordinary Members,	....	25
Honorary Members,	....	1
Associate Members,	....	1

The loss of Members by deaths, departures to Europe, and withdrawals, has been—by departure to Europe, Messrs. W. ADAM, A COLVIN, H. WALTERS, COL. BURNEY, and Mr. JAMES PRINSEP. By withdrawals, Messrs. W. BRUCE and W. DENT.

By deaths in India, Messrs. A. E. DOBBS and JOHN BELL, and in France Monsieur A JACQUET, an honorary Member, and one of the most distinguished Orientalists of the day.

We designedly forbear on this occasion from the attempt at any minute obituary notice of the Members whose deaths we so deeply lament. The decease of M. JACQUET was only announced at our last meeting. His friend and fellow labourer, EUGENE BURNOUF, in the letter which conveys this melancholy news, gives a touching narrative of the circumstances of M. JACQUET'S malady and death. A victim to consumption, induced by his unremitting studies, he died at the age of 28, in the delusive confidence of revealing by his future labours much of what is still mysterious in the history and chronology of the Hindoo nations. A quarter of an hour before death he was still ardently pursuing his studies. In the homage paid to his memory in France, the Asiatic Society of Bengal most unanimously and profoundly concur.

Publications.

We have to state that during the past year the 4th and last volume of the "*Mahabharata*" has been the only work printed in the Oriental department. The volume will be immediately published, and will cost the Society between 4 and 5,000 Rupees. The liberality of Government has most opportunely enabled the Society to meet from its own resources this heavy outlay, which otherwise would have fallen on our respected Secretary, Mr. PRINSEP. The sale of the work in France has unfortunately proved far short of M. BURNOUF'S sanguine predictions.

The publication of the "*Sharira Vidaya*," or translation of "Hooper's Anatomist's Vade Mecum," has been sanctioned by the Society in conjunction with Mr. MUIR, who has generously subscribed 1,000 Rupees for this special object. There is yet however much difficulty in this undertaking. The professional members of the Society consider the work wholly useless without plates, and the lowest estimate yet obtained places the cost of such illustrations at $6 \times 250 = 1,500$ Rupees. A reference to Europe was evidently expedient to procure cheaper and better cuts than are obtainable in India, and for the result of such reference the work is now postponed.

The publication of the "*Sharya-ul-Islam*" by the Newab TAHAWUR JUNG, has unfortunately been much retarded. The delay is attributable to the conjoint inactivity of the Printer and of the Moulavee employed to correct the proofs. Means are being taken however to accelerate the completion of the work. An advance of 800 Rupees has this month been made to the Printer, in pursuance of a resolution of the Committee of Papers and Finance.

The Transactions of the Society will soon be augmented by the publication of the 2nd Parts of the 19th and 20th Volumes. We may be pardoned for anticipating that the literary reputation of the Society will be well sustained in their pages. If the Society has been reproached with neglecting the Natural History of Asia, the part of the

Physical Researches now in the press, will, we are confident, more than remove that stigma. The bulk of the Physical Part will consist of Dr. M'CLELLAND'S elaborate paper on "Indian *Cyprinidæ*."

In connexion with the subject of publications, we should not omit to notice two works by Members of the Society, to which Government has contributed either by subscription or by still more direct support. The first is the version by Mr. TORRENS of the ever-charming "*Alif Leila*." The second is the remarkable and valuable Cochinchinese Dictionary, by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Isauropolis, now Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Bengal.

Antiquities.

In antiquarian enterprise, research, and discovery, the past year has been most prolific. Among the events of interest we notice in our records, we may particularize the liberal grant by Government for the erection of the Allahabad pillar—the receipt from the Rev. Mr. WILSON of fac-similes of the Girnar inscriptions—Mr. PRINSEP'S most important discovery of the name of ANTIOCHUS in two of the edicts of ASHOKA—Mr. PRINSEP'S translation of the religious edicts of ASHOKA, discovered in Gujerat and in Cuttack—and the discovery that the inscription of Junegurh related the circumstance of the repair of a bridge in the time of CHUNDRU GUPTA, by ASHOKA, his grandson.

To these let us add, the interesting fruits of Mr. KITTOE'S Researches in Cuttack—the active and successful measures adopted by Government to procure fac-similes of the Junegurh and Girmaghur inscriptions—the verification by Lieut. POSTANS of Mr. PRINSEP'S views as to the reading of the name of ANTIGONUS next to that of PTOLEMY in the 14th edict, in the Girnar inscriptions—the measures taken by Government to prevent the demolition of the Kanarah Temple—and, lastly, Professor LASSEN'S simultaneous proposition of an alphabet for the Pali and Bactrian languages, nearly identical with that described by Mr. PRINSEP in the July number of the Journal. On even this disjointed and hasty glance, we may well be proud of the progress the Society has accomplished in the fulfilment of one of the chief objects of its institution. It will, we doubt not, be universally admitted that the Asiatic Society during the past year has justified its high name, and retained its natural position, as the most energetic and successful agent of antiquarian discovery in the East.

Statistics.

Owing to the lamented deaths of Sir B. MALKIN and Mr. BELL, the retirement of Messrs. WALTERS and ADAM, and the withdrawal of Messrs. BIGNEL, CURNIN, and M'CLINTOCK, the Committee was at the end of the year 1838 reduced to four Members, Messrs. EWART, SPRY, BAILLIE, and STEWART. Mr. W. P. GRANT has since been elected a Member.

It is understood that Dr. STEWART has been for some time engaged in tabulating translations of the Records of Native Mortality in Calcutta, with the view to illustrate the localities of disease in this city, and the effects of climate on the health of its inhabitants. Dr. SPRY has prepared a series of tables illustrating the state of education among different classes of Society in Bengal. Mr. EWART has ready for press some very valuable original tables connected with the currency and trade of Calcutta. The only paper which has yet appeared in common with the labors of this Committee, is the very important document by Mr. H. T. PRINSEP, on the decrement of juvenile European life in Bengal. This valuable contribution to vital statistics has already appeared in the Society's Journal.

The Statistical Committee have met with the most willing and efficient support from the Government, and from the Parent Society. Access has been granted to all official records connected with the subjects of finance, commerce, education, and judicial administration. The Society has already contributed 500 Rs. to defray any expenses incurred by the Committee. High expectations are consequently entertained as to the harvest to be reaped from so fertile a field, by such active labourers, and under such warm and constant encouragement. The form best suited for the publication of the documents already prepared has excited considerable discussion, and still awaits a final decision.

Library.

The Librarian has been kind enough to comply with our request for a detailed report of the accessions to our collection during the last year, and he has classified the entire under the heads of languages and subjects. We now beg leave to present his report, by which it appears that we have received,

Publications in English,	..	117
in French,	.. ..	31
in Latin,	.. ..	3
in German,	.. ..	5
in Dutch,	.. ..	2
in Persian,	.. ..	6
in Arabic,	.. ..	4
in Turkish,	.. ..	1

Total, .. 174 up to the period of Mr. Csoma's Report.

On the last day of the old year, we had the pleasure of receiving from M. CASSIN the highly important consignments exhibited on the table at the last meeting.

199 vols. 4to. and 8vo.

109 Pamphlets.

The works in question embrace some of the most important and valuable publications in every department of Natural History.

The mode in which this supply has been obtained is also very gratifying, the expense having been defrayed by the sale of our Oriental Publications in Paris. It is pleasing to observe this reciprocation of benefits by the cultivation of apparently opposite pursuits—We have exchanged the ancient lore of the East, for the most modern and useful sciences of Europe. Each branch of our labors thus proves auxiliary to the other. The researches of the naturalist are promoted by the discoveries of the philologist and antiquarian, and thus, each in our particular sphere, we sustain the reputation and enhance the utility of a Society established for the universal purpose of investigating “whatever is performed by man or produced by nature” in the East.

Museum of Natural History.

Mr. EVANS has sent in an Annual Report, which will be published separately for your information.

Miscellaneous.

During the past year some miscellaneous passages in our history deserve to be recorded in our annual notice.

In January we had the gratification of witnessing the erection in our apartments of the bust of our distinguished associate, Professor WILSON. The feeling excited on

this occasion, led on the following month to the adoption of measures, by which we look forward to an early installation of the like remembrances of Sir WM. JONES, of Mr. COLEBROOKE, and Dr. MILL. This is indeed an object worthy of a grateful and wise Society, and must excite in the present Members the ambition of ultimately deserving such inestimable rewards.

In February a despatch was received from the Court of Directors, ordering 40 copies of each number of the Society's Journal—an act of generous patronage most fitly bestowed on the periodical, as it was then conducted. It was moreover but the forerunner of still greater munificence, in the grant authorized in September of 500 Rupees per mensem for the encouragement of Oriental Publications.

Nor while we acknowledge this princely aid from Government, should we be silent on the liberality of some individual benefactors. Among these, Mr. MUIR stands pre-eminent—his subscription of 1000 Rupees to the expenses of the "*Sharira Vidaya*" will we trust ere long be instrumental in placing a practical work on Anatomy within the reach of the hereditary physicians of the East. Another act of warm co-operation, and we have done. Let us commemorate the readiness with which Mr. JAMES PRINSEP sustained, by an outlay of 6,000 Rupees, the publication of the "*Mahabharata*," which would otherwise have necessarily been discontinued. For this we are fortunately enabled to indemnify Mr. PRINSEP, but he is not the less entitled to this grateful notice of his unrivalled liberality.

In conclusion of this very imperfect Report, we should have dwelt in due and deserved detail on the vast loss we have experienced in Mr. PRINSEP's departure to Europe, had not the subject been so fully and recently before the Society, and so perfectly dealt with in the President's address. We have now only to express our earnest hopes that in full health and spirit Mr. PRINSEP may soon return to the scenes of his brilliant and numerous triumphs. His absence must not however altogether nullify the movement he excited. It seems to us too that the best proof, of the esteem and affection in which we hold him, will be the perseverance in his pursuits, and in the support of his Journal, until his presence enables the Society to enjoy again the advantage of his inestimable labours.

(Signed) J. C. C. SUTHERLAND,
W. B. O'SHAUGHNESSY, M. D.
Acting Secretaries.
